

CLAIMS

We claim:

5 1. A method for style-checking a text document to achieve clarity, conciseness and reader comfort, comprising the steps of:

a. displaying a commendatory indicator if a subject and corresponding verb of a sentence or clause in a text document are juxtaposed;

b. displaying a critical indicator if said subject and verb are not juxtaposed;

10 c. displaying a critical indicator if said document includes a prepositional phrase;

d. displaying a commendatory indicator if said document includes a strong verb; and,

15 e. displaying a critical indicator if said document includes a weak verb.

2. The method of Claim 1, further including the step of inputting said document to a computer system before displaying said indicators.

20 3. The method of Claim 1, wherein the steps of displaying said indicators comprises displaying said indicators on a computer display terminal.

4. The method of Claim 1, wherein the document is an electronic document.

25 5. The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of displaying said document on a computer display terminal with said indicators.

6. The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of displaying said document on a planar, non-electronic display medium with said indicators.

30 7. The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of parsing sentences of said document before displaying said indicators.

8. The method of Claim 1, wherein the step of displaying a commendatory indicator if said subject and verb are juxtaposed comprises highlighting said subject and verb in a unique color.

5 9. The method of Claim 1, wherein the step of displaying a critical indicator if said subject and verb are not juxtaposed comprises highlighting a word interposed between said subject and verb in a unique color.

10 10. The method of Claim 1, wherein the step of displaying a critical indicator if said document includes a prepositional phrase comprises highlighting said prepositional phrase with a color indicating an undesirable construction.

15 11. The method of Claim 1, wherein the step of displaying a critical indicator if said document includes a prepositional phrase is carried out for all prepositional phrases except those which express location.

20 12. The method of Claim 1, wherein the step of displaying a commendatory indicator if said document includes a strong verb comprises displaying a diacritical mark with said strong verb.

13. The method of Claim 1, wherein the step of displaying a commendatory indicator if said document includes a strong verb includes referring to a verb lookup list.

25 14. The method of Claim 1, wherein the step of displaying a critical indicator if said document includes a weak verb comprises displaying a diacritical mark with said weak verb.

30 15. The method of Claim 1, wherein the step of displaying a critical indicator if said document includes a weak verb includes referring to a verb lookup list.

16. The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of displaying a subject of a sentence or clause in said document with an informational indicator.

17. The method of Claim 16, wherein the step of displaying a subject with an informational indicator comprises displaying said subject with an underline.

18. The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of displaying a verb in said document with an informational indicator.

19. The method of Claim 18, wherein the step of displaying a verb with an informational indicator comprises displaying said verb with a double underline.

20. The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of displaying a commendatory indicator if said document includes a transition word.

21. The method of Claim 20, wherein the step of displaying a commendatory indicator if said document includes a transition word includes referring to a transition word lookup list.

22. The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of displaying a critical indicator if a sentence includes a string of three or more prepositional phrases in a row.

23. The method of Claim 22, further comprising the step of displaying an informational indicator if a prepositional phrase in said string expresses location.

24. The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of displaying an informational indicator if a sentence in said document is a simple sentence.

25. The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of displaying an informational indicator if a sentence in said document is a compound sentence.

26. The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of displaying an informational indicator if a sentence in said document is a complex sentence.

27. The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of displaying an informational indicator if a sentence in said document is a compound-complex sentence.

28. The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of displaying a critical indicator if said document includes a gerund.

29. The method of Claim 28, wherein the step of displaying a critical indicator if said document includes a gerund includes referring to a non-gerund "ing"-ending word lookup list.

30. The method of Claim 28, wherein the step of displaying a critical indicator if said document includes a gerund comprises highlighting said gerund with a color indicating an undesirable construction.

31. The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of displaying a critical indicator if said document includes a sentence starting with the word "There."

32. The method of Claim 31, wherein the step of displaying a critical indicator if said document includes a sentence starting with the word "There," comprises highlighting the word "There" with a color indicating an undesirable construction.

33. The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of displaying a critical indicator if said document includes a sentence starting with the word "It."

34. The method of Claim 33, wherein the step of displaying a critical indicator if said document includes a sentence starting with the word "It," comprises highlighting the word "It" with a color indicating an undesirable construction.

35. The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of displaying a critical indicator if said document includes the word "responsible."

5 36. The method of Claim 35, wherein the step of displaying a critical indicator if said document includes the word "responsible," comprises highlighting the word "responsible" with a color indicating an undesirable construction.

37. The method of Claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

- 10 i. displaying an informational indicator with the grammatical subject of the first sentence of each paragraph of said document; and,
- ii. displaying said same informational indicator with each grammatical subject of each additional sentence in said paragraph wherein said grammatical subject is the same as, or synonymous with, said grammatical subject of said first sentence.

15 38. Apparatus capable of carrying out the method of Claim 1.

39. A method for quantifying reader discomfort in a text document, comprising the steps of:

- 20 a. establishing a scoring baseline;
- b. adding a discomfort point to said baseline for a high ratio of nonjuxtaposed subjects and verbs to juxtaposed subjects and verbs in a document;
- c. adding a discomfort point to said baseline for a high ratio of weak verbs to strong verbs in said document; and,
- 25 d. adding a discomfort point to said baseline for a high ratio of the number of sentences in said document to the number of transition words in said document.

30 40. The method of Claim 39, further including the step of reporting said discomfort points to a writer or editor.

41. The method of Claim 41, wherein said reporting step comprises displaying said discomfort points on a computer display terminal.

5 42. The method of Claim 39, further including the step of adding a discomfort point to said baseline for the topic of a sentence in said document not being the same as said sentence's grammatical subject.

10 43. The method of Claim 39, further including the step of adding a discomfort point to said baseline for each sentence in said document over a predetermined length.

15 44. The method of Claim 39, further including the step of adding a discomfort point to said baseline for a high ratio of the number of sentences in a paragraph of said document to repeated identical and synonymic uses of a grammatical subject of a first sentence of said paragraph.

20 45. The method of Claim 39, further including the step of adding a discomfort point to said baseline for a high ratio of the number of long sentences in said document to the number of short sentences in said document.

25 46. The method of Claim 39, further including the step of adding a discomfort point to said baseline for an unacceptable ratio of simple sentences to compound sentences to complex sentences.

30 47. The method of Claim 39, further including the step of subtracting a discomfort point if said document is a technical document.

48. Apparatus capable of carrying out the method of Claim 39.

49. A method for editing a text document, comprising the steps of:

- a. inputting a text document to a computer system;
- b. conducting error-correcting functions to achieve clarity, conciseness and reader comfort; and,
- 5 c. displaying said text document in a corrected form.

50. The method of Claim 49, wherein said error-correcting functions comprise replacing the word "responsible" with the verb form of a gerund which follows.

10 51. The method of Claim 49, wherein, when the word "It" starts a sentence, said error-correcting functions comprise replacing the word "It" with words describing to whom or to what "It" refers.

15 52. The method of Claim 49, wherein, when the word "There" starts a sentence, said error-correcting functions comprise:

- i. deleting the word "There" and a following weak verb;
- ii. determining the topic of said sentence;
- iii. adjusting the subject and verb of said sentence in accordance with said sentence's topic.

20 53. The method of Claim 49, wherein, when said sentence includes three or more prepositional phrases in a row, said error-correcting functions comprise moving a prepositional phrase to the beginning of a sentence.

25 54. The method of Claim 53, wherein, when one prepositional phrase of said three prepositional phrases in a row expresses location, further including the step of moving said location-expressing prepositional phrase to said beginning of said sentence.

30 55. The method of Claim 49, wherein, when said sentence includes three or more prepositional phrases in a row, said error-correcting functions comprise attempting to collapse the object of a preposition in a prepositional phrase to an adjective, and placing

said adjective in front of a sentence's subject.

5 56. The method of Claim 49, wherein, when a sentence includes both a weak verb and a gerund, said error-correcting functions comprise replacing said weak verb with the verb form of said gerund.

57. The method of Claim 56, further including the step of referring to a verb lookup list.

10 58. The method of Claim 49, wherein, when a noun in a prepositional phrase interposed between a sentence's subject and verb is capable of action, said error-correcting functions comprise making said noun the subject of said sentence, and deriving a substitute verb from what said subject does.

15 59. The method of Claim 49, wherein, when a transition word is between a sentence's subject and verb, said error-correcting functions comprise moving said transition word to the beginning of said sentence.

20 60. The method of Claim 59, further including the step of referring to a transition word lookup list.

61. The method of Claim 49, wherein, when a sentence with a weak verb has an actor capable of action, said error-correcting functions comprise:

- 25 i. replacing said sentence's subject with said action-capable actor; and,
ii. replacing said weak verb with a strong verb.

62. further including the step of referring to a verb lookup list.

30 63. Apparatus capable of carrying out the method of Claim 49.